

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A lymph node detecting apparatus comprising:

an excitation light source, illuminating excitation light onto a living body observation portion that includes a lymph node near a tumor into which a fluorescent dye that emits fluorescence of a predetermined wavelength has been injected in advance;

an optical filter, transmitting a fluorescence image generated from the living body observation portion;

an image pickup device means, picking up the fluorescence image transmitted through the optical filter;

an adjusting means, adjusting at least one of a luminance and a contrast of an observation image output from the image pickup device means; and

an image displaying means; displaying the observation image, adjusted by the adjusting means, as an image for detecting the lymph node, wherein

the optical filter transmits the fluorescence image and transmits, at a predetermined light intensity, a reflection image from the living body observation portion illuminated by the excitation light, and

the observation image, in which a fluorescence picture image that corresponds to the fluorescence image and a normal picture image that corresponds to the reflection image of the excitation light are overlapped, is obtained by the image pickup device.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The lymph node detecting apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the image pickup device means is integral with the excitation light source.

Claim 3 (Canceled).

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The lymph node detecting apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the image displaying means is mountable onto a head portion of an observer.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The lymph node detecting apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising an image recording means, recording the observation image adjusted by the adjusting means.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The lymph node detecting apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising: a light guide means for guiding the excitation light from the excitation light source to the living body observation portion; and an image guide means for guiding the fluorescence image from the living body observation portion to the image pickup device means; and being arranged as an endoscopic apparatus.